

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

March 8, 2016

Los Angeles County has been a national leader in combating human and sex trafficking, particularly of minors. According to a United States Department of Justice study, close to 300,000 children are at risk of commercial sexual exploitation across the nation. The risk is particularly high in the Los Angeles area, which several Federal agencies have identified as a major hot spot for human trafficking crimes.

The County has partnered with law enforcement agencies, other government entities, and community organizations to combat this growing problem, and to bolster services for victims of human trafficking. However, current State law does not sufficiently penalize individuals convicted of these types of crimes, including the increasing number of violent gangs who force children and vulnerable adults into the sex trade. Without a change in law, there is little disincentive for pimps and organized criminal organizations to halt what has become an increasingly profitable crime.

Under current law, individuals convicted of directing and/or recruiting individuals in to the sex trade, otherwise known as pimping, are guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for no more than six months, by a fine not exceeding \$1,000, or by both. AB 1771, by Assemblymember Patrick O'Donnell, as

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introduced on February 3, 2016, would increase the penalty of imprisonment to one year. In addition, AB 1771 would add active participation in a criminal street gang to those circumstances that may be used to determine whether an individual is guilty of this crime.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Sacramento advocates to support AB 1771, legislation that would increase the punishment of those convicted of pimping and other crimes related to human trafficking.

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